

To: Philip Mossman
60 Montgomery St.
Bangor, ME 04401

From: Eric P. Newman

May 8, 2000

The draft of my article on New York City bread assizes which I sent you needs two further footnotes which I did not include because I was not sure how detailed they should be or where to put them.

They are:

For a general overview of the history of "coppers" in England and America see: Philip N. Mossman, Money of the American Colonies and Confederation, (New York 1993), Chapter 5, etc.

For previous and subsequent use of "coppers" in payment of assize regulation of bread and flour prices, see Mossman, p. 230, footnote 75.

I look forward to your corrections and suggestions as to the article in general

Thrive.

Philip L. Mossman, M.D.
60 Montgomery Street
Bangor, Maine 04401-3841
May 9, 2000

Dear Eric,

Thank for sending me your recent manuscript regarding the assizes of bread in NYC during the Revolution. I found this very interesting and have a few comments.

When I was reading the old newspapers during research for my book, I always checked the assizes of bread which I found fascinating. It reminded me of the old O.P.A. of WW II. I quoted the price of bread [p. 230n.] during the Coppers Panic since this stable, regulated price gave some indication as to the current value at which coppers were received. Before the War, the price was 2.1 coppers per pound and your article quotes 3 lb. 4 oz. at 14 coppers, or 4.3 coppers per pound. Thus, bread was about double in price in occupied New York in January 1777 since I assume that most of the flour was imported. The marked increase in price by November 1777 certainly speaks to a shortage of flour rather than a monetary inflation.

However in the third paragraph, it is not clear to me just how the merchants were switching prices from currency to sterling. Does this mean that if any article were priced at, let's say, 6d. [NY], they were calling it 6d. sterling, and thus demanding 10.6 d. [NY] ? The rate of one English shilling to 1 shilling 9 pence, currency, was in keeping with the established rate of 54d., sterling, to the Spanish 8 reales. In your note #1, Gary's name is Trudgen - that is the only error I found in proof reading.

Thanks so much for sharing this with me. May I ask how the Massachusetts silver article going?

I hope all is well with you and yours.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Philip'.

Philip L. Mossman, M.D.
60 Montgomery Street
Bangor, Maine 04401-3841
May 9, 2000

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Thanks so much for sharing this with me. May I ask how the Massachusetts silver article going?

I hope all is well with you and yours.

Sincerely,

5/19/00

Hello Eric

I got your letter of 5/8 today (postmarked 5/16) and it seems you did not have mine of 5/9. Here is a copy. I liked your paper very much - but I did have the question about just how the merchants switched prices.

Bob

Bill

Philip L. Mossman, M.D.
60 Montgomery Street
Bangor, Maine 04401-3841
August 24, 2000

Eric P. Newman
6450 Cecil Avenue
St. Louis, Missouri 63105

Dear Eric,

I've been reading some of our prior correspondence and I think I overlooked a question you once asked. In your letter of February 19, 2000, you responded to Lou Jordan's Constellatio Nova preview by telling me it "is a puzzlement" and wondered if it was intended for *CNL*. I was so focused on the two papers you sent me [the assizes of bread and the Massachusetts silver legend] that I never answered your primary questions. Yes - I did want you to comment - which you kindly did. Thank you. The paper, with some modifications, is planned for the December 2000 *CNL*. What is the status of your two manuscripts? We are always looking for articles.

I hope you and Evelyn have been enjoying your summer. It has been cool here for the most part and early on there was more rain than usual. We have made no major trips - only an Elderhostel to PEI and a week's excursion planned to Bermuda in October. Other than that we have just been between Bangor and New Brunswick where we have a cottage. Nothing new on the collecting front. It looks like the dust on outer Broadway is starting to settle.

Best regards,

Sincerely,


Subj: **Bread**
Date: 09/30/2000 8:13:46 PM Central Daylight Time
From: [PLMossman](#)
To: [EricNumis](#)

Hello Eric,
It was a pleasure to have spoken with you this evening. The authors of the 1785 article are proceeding with due caution. I think you will hear more from them soon.

The assizes of bread article was sitting on my lap as I was talking with you but I didn't see it. The loaf was 1 lb 14 oz. for 4 coppers.

So the loaf was $16 + 14 = 30$ oz.

So reducing it to a pound, the price of bread [16 oz] is

$16\text{oz} / 30\text{oz} = x / 4 \text{ coppers}$ $x = 2.133 \text{ coppers}$

or 2.1 coppers per pound in 1766 and 1776.

Best regards

Phil

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Best regards

Phil

Subj: **How much dough was paid for bread**
Date: 10/01/2000 3:41:48 AM Central Daylight Time
From: [EricNumis](#)
To: [PLMossman](#)

Thank you for the bread detail. You have given me a price which was effective both before the War and after the War had begun and both are identical. This will be put into the article. The reason the price went up during occupation by the British is that they tried to pay with Euro coppers and the makers of Danish pastry would not accept them. I will send the revised article shortly for use in AJN rather than CNL.

Subj: Re: Bread
Date: 10/11/2000 1:54:05 PM Central Daylight Time
From: [PLMossman](#)
To: [EricNumis](#)
CC: [PLMossman](#)

Subj: Re: Bread
Date: 00-10-11 14:51:36 EDT
From: PLMossman
To: Eric Newman

Hello Eric,

Your letter arrived yesterday and the Assizes article last week. By sending my reply by e-mail will be much faster and cheat the government out of 33¢. I'm happy on both accounts!

I had to make a chart to visualize the price structure.

Date	weight	price	compared to base
before 7/4/1776	1 - 14/16	[1.875]	4 2.13 coppers per lb.
1/10/1777	3 - 4/16	[3.25]	14 4.31
2/1/1777	2 - 0	[2]	21 10.5
7/9/1779	2 - 0	[2]	14 7
2/18/1780	2 - 0	[2]	15 7.5
3/20/1780	2 - 8/16	[2.5]	14 5.6
11/23/1780	2 - 8/16	[2.5]	16 6.4
1/16/1782	2 - 4/16	[2.25]	14 6.22
5/8/1783	3	[3]	14 4.67

prepared a table

Two questions, check paragraph 2 on p. 3. You were listing events chronologically and went from Nov 11, 1777 to Feb 1, 1777 and then Feb 13, 1779. Should the second year be 1778??

On the top of p. 4 you talk about the two appearances and qualities of bread. Did they both weigh the same 2½ lb. or was the finer one 2 lb.? Logic says they were different weights at the same price. It is not clear in your text.

A really fun paper!!

I corrected it

Next - re: the 1805 table you just sent me. Those are great. One of our patrons, Tom Kays is submitting a paper on cut pistareens he has unearthed in Virginia. He would really make good use of the second on the tables. Can I send it to him?

Lastly - thanks so much for your advice to Byron Weston. What you did was to stimulate him to consider and explore all the possible alternatives [which he did] and not jump to a seemingly obvious conclusion. He appreciated that.

Many thanks
Phil

Subj: Re: Bread on the waters
Date: 10/12/2000 8:36:16 AM Central Daylight Time
From: [EricNumis](#)
To: [PLMossman](#)

I am revising my entire article on bread to make everything clearer. Your suggestions were excellent and I am making up a table to adopt your idea. My difficulty is that I do not type my own material and write in long hand first. Then after proofreading and changing I have it revised by the typist. The result is that new typos are made sometimes and I do not catch them. I am not a good enough typist to use the keyboard fast enough to keep up with my getting things stated as clearly as I can. The modern age is going ahead faster than I can keep up with it. Please diagnose my dilemma and prescribe the proper elixir with no side effects. Steroid me in the right direction. Eric Copper-nicus.

Subj: Re: New York City Mayor's office
Date: 10/18/2000 6:26:43 PM Central Daylight Time
From: [GTrudgen](#)
To: [EricNumis](#)

Hello Eric,

And I see that you still have your sense of wit and humor.

My use of the New York City mayoral records included only the minutes of the Mayor's Court. To obtain the minutes, I used the resources of the Mormon Church's Family History Center. They have the minutes on microfilm. The actual minutes are held in the Archives of the New York County Clerk's Office, Room 703, at 31 Chambers Street in NYC. I have not inspected the minutes in person. You may want to stop by your local Family History Center and determine what records they have on microfilm from the mayor's office during this time period. I don't believe, however, that the Mayor's Court was in session during the British occupation of New York City, the time period that you are interested in. David Mathews kept the title of mayor during the occupation, but the city was ran by the British military, specifically Major General Robertson. I hope this is some help.

Gary

Subj:	New York Bread
Date:	01/10/2001 8:07:45 AM Central Standard Time
From:	PLMossman
To:	EricNumis

Good Morning Eric,

I'm doing something unique [for me], and by cutting and pasting [using bread dough paste, of course], I'm responding to your last two messages at the same time. Sort of like saving a stamp !!

#1 EPN says:

It just occurred to me that my article on bread and coppers was supposed to be in the CNL 115. I looked in my file and cannot find a copy of the table I prepared at your suggestion to put at the end of the six page article. Did I send it to you or not? It was not typed but written out. If you have a copy would you be nice enough to send it to me. Otherwise I will have to prepare it over again. Sorry to cause a problem.

PLM: You never indicated to me that you were submitting the bread article to the CNL = I thought it was for my impression and comments. In my letter to you of August 24, 2000, I sort of hinted that we would like it.

Yes - I did find the chart.

#2 EPN says:

I was lucky and located the table at the end of the above article, so drop my request for it. I assume you have the complete article (seven pages plus a table) and can let me know at your convenience if you or your committee have determined whether you wish to publish it in CNL Eric

PLM: I am the committee and the committee says yes!! I would very much like to print it. Call me the Supreme Court - the vote of one.

Next:

Now I need to discuss something with you **confidentially** - about the CNL and ANS. We are having some problems, the biggest of which now is a limit of about 30 pages an issue which has caused a lot of back up. Ute and I will need to straighten this out - the problem is the cost of printing and mailing - a very reasonable concern considering the status of ANS finances, but this puts me between the rock and a hard place since authors won't be too happy with this delay. And I depend on them. You will note how the CNL subscription has gone up - \$35 if you are not an ANS member, and \$20 if you are. [20+40 = a total of \$60]. There is some worry that we will lose patronage.

Re: your bread article. I think that stories that deal with the economics and monetary history of the period are prime subjects for CNL. It puts what we collect in a proper perspective. Others may disagree - but that's their problem.

For the April issue, I already have an article of more than 30 pages about a study of

Friday, January 12, 2001 America Online: EricNumis

Spanish money dug in the Virginia area. A great manuscript with wonderful pictures, but also there is a similar companion study from the Newburgh areas of NY. I don't have room for them both under our guide lines. I expect a very unhappy author - again - a need to have a conference with Ute.

August is not decided yet [but there is a lot in the hopper], but for December, I was hoping for an article by Jordan about the chronology of Mass silver and your Mass silver article, as a pair. Besides that, there are a bunch of little things. You get some realization of my obsessive compulsion in planning ahead. It was very frustrating when the December 2000 mailing was delayed.

Now my personal frustration is that people just don't respond to material printed in CNL !! But with C4, there is all sorts of comments on line if a new auction is on the horizon, or if someone submits an interesting coin on the e-group chat room. So - where does interest really lie? Any thoughts?

See you - stay warm.

Best regards,

Phil

1/12/01

Hi Phil: In the second to last line of the table at the end of the article on the above subject I inserted "15" coppers to the New York shilling. Please change it to "14". Please tell me if I am wrong. You see I made the article smaller! Eric

Subj:	Re: Bread Assizes
Date:	01/13/2001 9:07:37 PM Central Standard Time
From:	PLMossman
To:	EricNumis

In a message dated 01-01-10 15:13:16 EST, you write:

<< In the second to last line of the table at the end of the article on the above subject I inserted "15" coppers to the New York shilling. Please change it to "14". Please tell me if I am wrong. You see I made the article "smaller"! >>

Hello Eric,

I see what you mean now. I thought you meant in the table a 15 vs a 14 in the actual table. What you mean to say is that in NY there were 14 coppers to the local shilling or 112 to the Spanish-American dollar. It was NJ where it was 15 coppers to the shilling. I'll change it.

Phil

Subj:	Another slant
Date:	02/16/2001 11:31:51 AM Central Standard Time
From:	PLMossman
To:	EricNumis

Hi Eric,
What about

Early American "**Coppers**" Specified in Bread Price Regulation **during** British Occupied New York City (1777-1783)

Changes in **red**.
Phil

Forwarded Message:

Subj:	Bread Assizes for the well bred
Date:	02/16/2001 10:32:25 AM Central Standard Time
From:	EricNumis
To:	PLMossman

My wife and I have returned alive from the barge trip in the Southern Louisiana gumbo swamps. The mosquitos and alligators were in circulation. The birds were beautiful and plentiful. I have not read your draft of my article as yet but now I want to suggest title changes. To emphasize the word Coppers it occurred to me to put it in quotation marks as most people are not too familiar with that word's usage. It could also be COPPERS in capitals. What do you think? I also believe that the first "in" of the title should be "for" in order not to repeat the word "in". Whatever you do is fine with me. I will read the balance as soon as I can. Thanks you so much.

Eric

Subj:	Re: Coppers for Bread
Date:	02/18/2001 3:42:30 PM Central Standard Time
From:	PLMossman
To:	EPNNES
CC:	GTrudgen

Hello Eric,
Do you have a new address? EPNNES ???

n a message dated 01-02-18 15:52:57 EST, you write:

<< PHIL: I wrote you about changes in the title a couple of days ago and asked my wife to comment. She says the title should be

Daily Bread - - Early American COPPERS Specified for Bread Price Regulation in British Occupied New York City (1777 - 1783)

THAT SOUNDS GOOD.

The first two words she believes will add reader interest. I agree. If you agree please change it.

Then I read the article itself and have a few more suggested changes on your draft. Page 1, Paragraph 1, Line 2 - The first letters of the words "Chapter Entitled" should be lower case.

I FOUND THAT AND ALREADY CHANGED IT.

P 1, PP 3, L 5 - The quotation mark at the end didn't print or is missing.

IT IS ONLY MISSING ON YOUR COPY - 'TIS A PROBLEM WITH MY COMPUTER.

P 1, PP 3, L 7 - Add the word "rate" after the word "price"

DONE

P 1, PP 4, L 6 - Change S in Sterling to lower case to conform.

DONE

P 1, PP 5, L 6 - Put "in addition to" in place of "rather than"

DONE

P 1, PP 5, L 8 - Put "insignificant" in place of "no other"

DO YOU MEAN **INSIGNIFICANT** OR **INSUFFICIENT** ?

Sunday, February 18, 2001 America Online: EPNNES

P 2, L 7 - The date is November 11 and not November 17 so please change it here and in the table at the end. To be consistent with the table also change "fifty percent" to "49.9%"

IT WAS ALREADY NOV 11, 1777 IN THE TABLE. DONE

P 2, L 9 - Change "accordingly" to "In proportion"

DONE

P 2, P 2, L 3 - add comma after "lbs."

CHANGED TO 2.5 LBS.,

P 2, P 2, L 10 - Insert " 22.3" for "about 20"

CHANGED TO 22.3 %.

Please change table as above indicated.

Sorry to bother you with my technical blunders. Thanks. Eric >>

NOT A PROBLEM - GARY CAN TAKE CARE OF IT .

PHIL

Phil: I really prefer the word insignificant to insufficient because there was virtually no other very small change, particularly in New York. Insufficient would indicate a modest amount in circulation of something other than coppers and as I understand it its presence was lacking. Perhaps there were a few pieces of Spanish American silver but the lowest denomination was a medio real which was too large for a small transaction. In Virginia there was a little cut up silver as you know from the article you have on hand but that did not happen in the middle or northern colonies. Massachusetts silver was also too large for small change. If I am wrong call the coppers. Eric

PHIL: I wrote you about changes in the title a couple of days ago and asked my wife to comment. She says the title should be **Daily Bread -- Early American COPPERS Specified for Bread Price Regulation in British Occupied New York City (1777 - 1783)** The first two words she believes will add reader interest. I agree. If you agree please change it. Then I read the article itself and have a few more suggested changes on your draft. Page 1, Paragraph 1, Line 2 -The first letters of the words "Chapter Entitled" should be lower case. P 1, PP 3, L 5 - The quotation mark at the end didn't print or is missing.

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Please change table as above indicated.

Sorry to bother you with my technical blunders. Thanks. Eric

Subj:	Re: Another slant
Date:	02/18/2001 8:27:27 PM Central Standard Time
From:	EricNumis
To:	PLMossman

Phil: You have churned up my thinking and added the right word -----"during." I do not feel that "specified" gives the right impression. I now suggest the following revision:

DAILY BREAD: The Use of "Coppers" in Bread Price Regulation during the British Occupation of New York City (1777 - 1783)

How does that strike you? Thanks again for your thoughtful input. PS:

I retrieved my lost material. Gateway is excused.

Eric